

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

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AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

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AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECIN, CG, SG, NI, PFOR

SUBJECT: ZAIREAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO NIGERIA

REF: LAGOS 10563

1. ZAIREAN FOREIGN MINISTER NGUZA KARL BOND LEFT LAGOS SEPT. 15 AFTER ACTIVE THREE-DAY VISIT WHICH INCLUDED TRIP WITH EXTAFF COMMISSIONER GARBA TO KADUNA-ZARIA AREA IN THE NORTH. AT PRESS CONFERENCE ON HIS DEPARTURE, VISITING FOMIN SAID HE HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE "EXTREMELY WARM RECEPTION" HE HAD BEEN ACCORDED HERE (MORE THAN MERE "FRATERNAL WELCOME" HE HAD EXPECTED) AND THAT HE WAS RETURNING HOME CONVINCED THAT NOTHING COULD NOW DETER CORDIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ZAIRE AND NIGERIA.

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HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR FMG'S SUPPORT OF THE SPECIAL

OAU MINISTERIAL COUNCIL CONFERENCE NEXT DECEMBER IN KINSHASA WHICH IS MEANT TO FOCUS ENTIRELY ON "ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA WITHOUT POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT." (ONE OF GARBA'S THEMES, TOO--SEE LAGOS 7148.) HE URGED AFRICAN STATES TO BUILD REAL UNITY BY CONCENTRATING MORE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LESS ON POLITICAL ISSUES AND RHETORIC. ASKED ABOUT REPORTS OF FIGHTING IN ANGOLA NEAR ZAIREAN BORDER, NGUZA STATED THAT, THOUGH HIS GOVERNMENT HAD NOT ORIGINALLY RECOGNIZED ANGOLA AND DOES NOT CONSIDER ITS SUPPORT FOR FNLA DURING THE CIVIL WAR SHAMEFUL OR A MISTAKE, "ZAIRE WILL NOT TOLERATE ANYBODY ATTACKING ANGOLA FROM ZAIREAN TERRITORY."

2. JOINT COMMUNIQUE, WAS ISSUED LAST DAY OF VISIT. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNT, COMMUNIQUE REAFFIRMS SIGNATORY COUNTRIES' DETERMINATION ACHIEVE TOTAL ERADICATION RACISM, COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM AND THEIR SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLES OF OPPRESSED PEOPLES OF ZIMBABWE, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. MURDER OF DEFENCELESS CIVILIANS AND CHILDREN AND ARREST OF AFRICAN NATIONALIST LEADERS IN SOUTH AFRICA IS STRONGLY CONDEMNED AS IS LATTER'S "ACTS OF AGGRESSION" AGAINST ZAMBIA. VIOLATION OF SOVEREIGNTY OF BOTSWANA AND MOZAMBIQUE BY RHODESIANS ALSO DENOUNCED. COMMUNIQUE CONTAINS AGREEMENT ZAIRE AND NIGERIA TO SET UP JOINT COMMISSION WHICH WILL MEET ALTERNATELY AT TWO CAPITALS. COMMISSION IS TO "RENDER FULLY OPERATIONAL THE BILATERAL ACCORD ALREADY CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES". (WE HAVE NOT YET SEEN OFFICIAL TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE BUT IT WOULD APPEAR THIS IS REAFFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT MADE DURING GARBA VISIT TO KINSHASHA LAST NOVEMBER FOR ZAIRE AND NIGERIA TO ESTABLISH "MIXED COMMISSION" PERIODICALLY TO STUDY BILATERAL, AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS--KINSHASA 9676, NOTAL).

3. IN "AUDIENCE" WITH HEAD OF STATE OBASANJO SEPTEMBER 14, NGUZA CHARACTERIZED NIGERIA AS ZAIRE'S "SINCERE FRIEND" AND CONVEYED PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S WISH THAT TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD COME CLOSER BOTH IN THEIR OWN AND THE CONTINENT'S INTERESTS. OBASANJO SAID FMG WANTED "VERY CORDIAL RELATIONSHIP" WITH ZAIRE. AFRICAN LEADERS SHOULD COOPERATE MORE CLOSELY AND CONSULT MORE FREQUENTLY. NIGERIA WOULD NOT ENCOURAGE DIVISION AMONG AFRICAN COUNTRIES SINCE THAT WOULD HELP THE CONTINENT'S "DETRACTORS AND EXPLOITERS."
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4. NIGERIANS CONTINUED TO USE ZAIREAN'S VISIT TO PUT PRESSURE ON SENEGAL OVER ECOWAS, WITH APPARENT AID FROM NGUZA HIMSELF. DURING KADUNA TRIP, GARBA (WITH NGUZA IN TOW) TOLD NEWSMEN THAT FMG IS "IN THE PROCESS TO TRACK DOWN THE POINT OF DISAGREEMENT ON THE PROTOCOL AND TREATY WITH SENEGAL." IN HIS DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE, VISITING FOREIGN MINISTER ASSERTED THAT ZAIRE IS NOT A SUITABLE CANDIDATE FOR ECOWAS MEMBERSHIP AND

"WE DON'T WANT ANYBODY TO PUSH US TO BECOME MEMBERS." GOVERNMENT-RUN "NEW NIGERIAN/ EDITORIALIZES TODAY THAT SENEGALS "RATHER FUNNY" INSISTENCE THAT ZAIRE BE INCLUDED IN ECOWAS HAS BEEN UNDERCUT BY NGUZA'S "CLARIFICATION" AND THUS SENEGAL SHOULD "COME BACK INTO THE FOLD" AS IT DID ON FESTAC.

5. COMMENT. FMG HAS GONE OUT OF ITS WAY IN RECEIVING ZAIREAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND, WITH GJ BA DANCING CONSTANT ATTENDANCE, SEEMS TO HAVE SUCCEEDED IN MAKING GOOD IMPRESSION AND ESTABLISHING AT LEAST A FACADE OF INFORMAL RELATIONS. WE PRESUME THERE WILL STILL BE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO AFRICAN RIVALS, MOST RECENTLY EXEMPLIFIED BY THEIR BACKING DIFFERENT FACTIONS IN ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR, BUT FOR THE MOMENT MAJOR POINTS OF CONTENTION SEEM TO HAVE BEEN SWEEPED UNDER THE CARPET. NIGERIANS APPEAR SATISFIED THAT RECOGNITION HAS ONCE MORE BEEN GIVEN TO ITS CHIEF PREOCCUPATIONS OF THE MOMENT-- SOUTHERN AFRICA AND ECOWAS. WHILE FMG MIGHT HAVE BEEN HAPPIER TO SEE SOME REFERENCE IN COMMUNIQUE AND NGIZA UTTERANCES TO NEED FOR USE OF FORCE TO EFFECT MAJORITY RULE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, IT UNDOUBTEDLY CONSOLATED THAT ZAIRE SEEMS TO HAVE REMOVED ITSELF AS OBSTACLE TO ECOWAS TAKE-OFF. WITH ONE COMPETITOR CO-OPTED, NIGERIA CAN DEVOTE MORE CONCENTRATED ATTENTION TO NOW ISOLATED SENEGALESE.
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